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Subject: RE: CRC Skyway Governance Advisory Committee - August 25 meeting agenda

I am unable to attend – out of town.

Here are my comments about the ordinance. Feel free to use them at the meeting.

Big picture – the strategy is wrong for the following reasons:

- Security must be accomplished with police in uniform. Private security personnel are not respected by the homeless or the young men hanging around the skyway.
- The security of the skyway is the primarily the city's responsibility not the building owners. The city politicians opened the vertical connection and refused to provide police coverage every hour it is open resulting in the recent severe beating after the flash mob from Central High descended on the central station using the green line to get there and other problems daily.
- The mayor announced a 23+% increase in Downtown taxes, additional police personal and none of the police assigned to the skyways – what is he thinking.
- The current plan applied to the Mall of America would be for the management to announce that it no longer would provide security personnel in the mall – replaced by each of the individual stores watching not only their own store but a portion of the mall. That is what the city is in effect suggesting. The absurdity of the city plan is breathtaking – it won't work.
- Removing the prohibition against sitting is another utterly asinine suggestion. At a recent BOMA Meeting the explanation was offered that one the city attorney's feels that if she sat in the skyway she would not be bothered, but if a young black male sat down he would be hassled. If that explanation for this absurd change is what is behind this my comments are – “who the hell are you to suggest that the building owners are racist”, and “if you try to sit in my skyway I will kick you out”.
- No security cameras should be required that do not meet a technical specification - that has not yet been developed - that would allow the cameras in the future to be centrally monitored.

So what will work

- Move the bus transfers to the Depot. A quarter of a billion dollars was spent to develop a “multimodal transit hub” - make it one and complete the move of the bus transfers from the current so called central station to the depot. That change will radically reduce the crime problem at the central station area and support efforts to revitalize the central business district. .

Until the move To the Depot

- Assign a minimum of two uniformed police officers only to the skyway – every hour that it is open. Have them ride Segways and/or bikes to get better coverage.
- One of the police offices can respond immediately to problems while calling backup while the other continues to patrol

- The officers would watch both the skyways and the streets (from the skyways) and patrol the ramps.
- Construct a security desk at the top of the vertical connection and man it with at least one uniformed police officer every hour the connection is open.
- Have all of the officers carry emergency phones that respond to 911 calls with GPS tracking to direct officer to the caller ASAP.
- Develop a petition addressed to the City and County attorney's offices demanding that illegal behavior by young people and the homeless be prosecuted in order to back up police efforts.
- Demand to know where the emergency backup shelter is located (there isn't one) to house the unhoused homeless this winter so that the skyways are not the default severe weather location.

If the above plan had been implemented the severe beating recently would not have happened. If the current security plan had been fully implemented – it would not have stopped the assault.